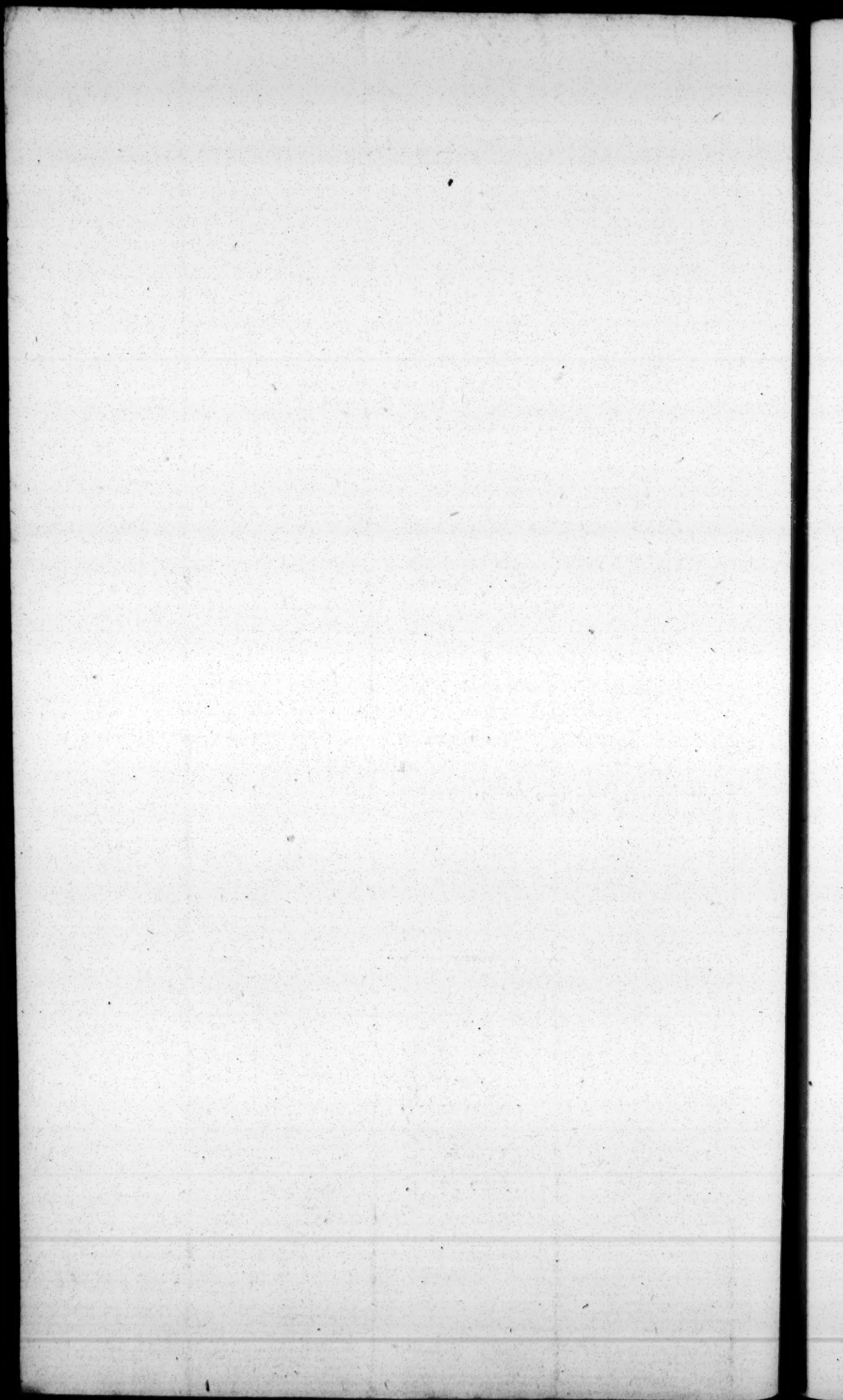


N. 11

THE
MINUTES
OF THE
PROCEEDINGS
OF THE
GENERAL CONVENTION OF THE DELEGATES,
FROM THE SOCIETIES OF THE
FRIENDS OF THE PEOPLE
THROUGHOUT SCOTLAND.
AT THEIR SEVERAL SITTINGS IN EDINBURGH,
ON THE
Eleventh, Twelfth, and Thirteenth of December, 1792.

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GENERAL CONVENTION OF THE DELEGATES,
FROM THE SOCIETIES OF THE
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THROUGHOUT SCOTLAND.

Baxter's Hall, Edin. Tuesday, Dec. 11. 1792.

AT noon, this day, the Delegates from the several Societies of the Friends of the People, throughout Scotland, assembled very numerously in their Convention Room here, in compliance with the following public advertisements.

SIR,

THE Convention of Delegates from the various Societies of THE FRIENDS OF THE PEOPLE, in and about Edinburgh, who assembled here upon the Twenty-first instant, expressed an unanimous wish for a General Convention of Delegates, from the various Societies in Scotland, established upon similar principles.

If it shall meet the approbation of the majority of the Societies, they propose to hold a Convention, upon the Eleventh day of December next, in the City of Edinburgh.

The various advantages which will result to the whole, from a consolidation of our common strength,

are too obvious to be detailed. If you approve of this measure, and resolve to send Delegates, inform us, in course of post. It shall be our care to prepare a proper place for meeting, of which we shall give you timely and regular notice. Be pleased to direct your letters to our Secretary, Mr. William Skirving, Head of the Horse-wynd, Edinburgh.

By Order of the Committee of Convention,

W. SKIRVING, *Sec'y.*

EDINBURGH, }
Nov. 23. 1792. }

P. S. We earnestly request of your Society, to communicate this intimation to any Societies in your neighbourhood, of whose existence, in consequence of their not having published their declaration of principles, we may be ignorant.

A Convention of Delegates from every Society of Friends of the People in Scotland, will be held at Edinburgh, in Baxter's Hall, in James's Court, on Tuesday the Eleventh of December next, at Twelve o'clock noon, against which time the General Committee shall have every thing prepared for the reception of the Delegates.

After a short conversation, Messrs. Bell, Muir, and Skirving, the present President, Vice-President, and Secretary, of the Edinburgh General Association of the Friends of the People, were requested to officiate in these several capacities, until the powers of the Delegates should be verified.

Mr. HUGH BELL in the Chair.

The commissions to the several Delegates were produced, and read. The roll being made up,

was called over, name by name, and intimation several times made, that if the name of any Delegate had been omitted, it should now be given in. The Convention was then declared assembled ; and the President, Vice-President, and Secretary retired.

General Convention assembled.

Some conversation took place relative to Office Bearers and Committees, and the impropriety of having these permanent. The Convention at length, on the motion of Lord Daer, resolved, That they would elect a President each day, or sitting ; and, upon a motion by Thomas Muir, younger, Esq. of Huntershill, it was resolved, That the Secretary should be permanent.

Lieut. Col. Dalrymple of Fordel was then unanimously called to the Chair ; and W. Skirving of Strathruddy elected Secretary.

COL. DALRYMPLE in the Chair.

After some motions relating to order, moved by Lord Daer and Mr. Fowler, and ordered to be laid upon the table in writing, the Convention proceeded to a declaration of principles ; and a scroll of resolutions being presented by John Morthland, Esq. Advocate, the Convention, upon his motion, resolved itself into a Committee, to consider the same, and to report against to-morrow's sitting.

Resumed the Convention.

COL. DALRYMPLE in the Chair.

Mr. Muir moved, That the two motions made by Capt. Johnston, resolved and published by the General Association of the Friends of the People, in and about Edinburgh, be also adopted, and published, as the Resolutions of the General Con-

vention. The same was agreed to unanimously, and a copy, drawn up in proper form, was ordered to be laid before the Convention to-morrow. A motion was made to adjourn till 6 o'clock in the evening; but, as this was opposed, it was agreed to adjourn till 10 o'clock next forenoon.

Convention Room, Wednesday, 10 o'Clock.

The Delegates assembled conform to the adjournment. Lord Daer moved, that the President of the former day take the Chair till the meeting was full, and that then they should elect their President for the day, agreeable to their former resolution; and the same was adopted.

COL. DALRYMPLE in the Chair.

Lord Daer, as ordered yesterday, gave in to the table, the following motions:

1. That it shall *not* be a rule, that when a motion is made and seconded, it shall be decided upon before any other be heard.

2. That when a subject is announced as the business for consideration, it shall be permitted to any person to propose what motions thereon he shall think it is proper should be adopted; and that when all the motions are laid on the table which any wish to propose, a vote shall be put, which proposal shall be first taken into consideration.

3. That when any business is under consideration, any incidental motion may be introduced; and if the meeting chuse not to take it into consideration at that moment, the meeting shall declare this, by resolving to *pass on to the ordinary course of business*.

4. That any motion may be discussed the day

it is proposed ; but that it shall not be finally decided or published to the world, till it be confirmed next day.

The Meeting being now full, Lord Daer was unanimously called to the Chair.

LORD DAER in the Chair.

Mr. Muir rose, to read a printed paper, which had been sent from Ireland, intitled, Address of the United Irishmen in Dublin, to the Delegates for Reform in Scotland ; the reading of it was opposed in point of form, the same not being before the House ; but the Address being declared a masterly performance, and a Declaration that afforded the most flattering evidence of the union and philanthropy of the Friends of Reform in Ireland, the reading of it was universally called for. After reading the same, the Convention passed to the Order of the Day.

Lord Daer being obliged to leave the meeting, the last preses was called to the Chair as a matter of course.

COL. DALRYMPLE in the Chair.

The Report of the Committee was called for, the Resolutions adopted in Committee were read, and debated paragraph by paragraph, when the following were, with great unanimity, resolved in Convention, and ordered to be published.

Resolved, That this Convention, taking under consideration the insidious, wicked, and inflammatory artifices, employed by the enemies of all Reform, to misrepresent and calumniate the Friends of the People, as the promoters of public discord, and advocates for an unjust and absurd violation of private property, by an equal division—Think it incumbent upon them to de-

clare, that they hold all such unprincipled designs in utter detestation and abhorrence, and that they will maintain the established Constitution of Great Britain, on its genuine acknowledged principles, consisting of Three Estates—King, Lords, and Commons.

Resolved, That the Members of this Convention will, to the utmost of their power, concur in aiding and strengthening the hands of the Civil Magistrates throughout this kingdom, to repress riot and tumult, and all attempts whatsoever to disturb the tranquillity, happiness, and good order of society.

Resolved, That it appears to this Convention, that very great abuses have arisen in the government of this country, from a neglect of the genuine principles of the Constitution; that these abuses have of late grown to an alarming height, and produced great discontents.

Resolved, That the essential measures to be pursued, in order to remove these abuses, and effectually to do away their mischievous consequences, are,

First, To restore the Freedom of Election, and an Equal Representation of the People in Parliament. And,

Secondly, To secure to the People a frequent exercise of their right of Electing their Representatives.

Resolved, That, for the purpose of accomplishing these constitutional objects, the proper and legal method is, that of applying by Petition to Parliament.

Resolved, That these Resolutions be printed in

the Scots and English Newspapers; and also be printed in hand-bills, for general distribution among the Associated Friends of the People, in different parts of Scotland.

Adjourned till 6 o'Clock in the Evening.

Convention Hall, Wednesday, 6 o'clock.

COL. DALRYMPLE in the Chair.

The Secretary presented the Plan of Organization for individual Societies, for District Associations, and for General Conventions; together with a written motion by Mr. Fowler, for a Committee of Publications, for the purpose of communicating Instruction. The same were received; and Messrs. Wilson and Fowler were requested to bring them before the House at a proper opportunity.

Mr. Muir and others brought forward the following motions, which were unanimously adopted; namely,

Resolved, That this Convention do address the Friends of the People at London.

Resolved, That the thanks of the Convention be returned to Messrs. Grey, Erskine, the Earl of Lauderdale, the Marquis of Lansdowne, Col. M'Leod, Lord Daer, and Col. Dalrymple, for their patriotic services in the cause of the People: To J. H. Tooke, Esq; for his masterly support of freedom: To the Hon. Major Maitland, Mr. Sheridan, Mr. Muir, Mr. Bell, and Capt. Johnston, for their important assistance to overturn corruption; also to the Right Hon. Charles Fox, for his determined speech in the last meeting of the Whig Club; and lastly, to all those Members of the House of Commons, who have supported in Parliament the cause of the people.

Agreed to Captain Johnston's two Resolutions of yesterday, which are as follow:

B

Resolved, That it be recommended to each Society of the Friends of the People, to expunge from the roll of their Members, the name or names of any individual or individuals, who may have acted illegally, tumultuously, or in any way to the disturbance of the public peace.

Resolved, That any individual or individuals, of the Societies of the Friends of the People, whose conduct may have been legal and orderly, and who may be persecuted by the arm of Power, for adhering to the cause of the People, be defended by the united strength of the Friends of the People.

The five following motions which Mr. Skirving proposed, were ordered to lie on the table :

I. That the Friends of the People in Britain, should unite in the application to Parliament, both as to the extent of Reform to be demanded, and as to the manner of executing their petition for the same.

II. That, therefore, this Convention should send two or three deputies to London, to concert a common plan with the Friends of the People there, advising always with the General Committees at Edinburgh, Glasgow, &c.

III. That these Committees, while the Deputies remain at London, should meet weekly, in order to instruct the Deputies from time to time.

IV. That when a common plan of operation is thus procured, a General Convention be called, to approve or amend the same, and particularly to direct the manner in which the Petitions shall be executed and presented to Parliament.

V. That the Convention recommend, That the Friends of the Constitution and of the People, be

in the mean time diligent, in forming themselves every where into Societies, in order to give the greater energy to their Petitions.

Mr. Allan proposed the following to be added to the resolutions already adopted:

That, in order to supersede the necessity of constantly resorting to the aid of a military force, it be recommended by the Convention, to the Associated Friends of the People, in the different parts of the country to hold themselves in readiness to support the civil Magistrate, when required, for the suppression of any popular tumults that may arise in their neighbourhood.

This motion was deferred, on account of its importance, till next day.

Mr. Muir moved, to appoint a Committee of Finance; and the following regulations were unanimously adopted; namely,

Resolved, That each District Association, shall have a Committee for regulating their own respective Finances.—That the several Committees of Finance, shall correspond with the Edinburgh Committee of Finance, as the Committee also of Finance for the General Convention, and remit to this Committee, as such, their respective contributions for the public interest.

Resolved, That this Committee of General Finance, in Edinburgh, shall lay before each Convention, a state of the receipt and expenditure.

Resolved, That the Convention, on the first day of their sitting, appoint a Committee of Constraint, for the purpose of inspecting the accounts of the Convention's Committee of Finance; and report the result of their examination to the Convention.

A motion that had been formerly made verbally, and adopted in the resolutions, *to petition Parliament*, was resumed; and the Convention resolved to petition Parliament with all convenient speed; and a Committee was appointed to draw up a schedule of said petition, and to present the same to-morrow.

Adjourned, till ten o'clock to-morrow.

Convention Hall, Thursday, 10 o'Clock.

The Delegates convened conform to adjournment; Colonel Dalrymple in the Chair.

Mr. Morthland moved, to have the two following Resolutions added to the former ones:

Resolved, That since a speedy and complete redress of our present grievances will be most effectually obtained by the joint co-operation of every Briton, who yet retains the spirit and the wish to be free, this Convention will, as far as their principles and objects will allow them, co-operate with the Society of the Friends of the People in London.

Resolved, That this Resolution, along with those voted at a former sitting of this Convention, (*page 7 and 8,*) be transmitted, by the Chairman, to the Society of the Friends of the People in London.

And the same was ordered accordingly.

Mr. Fowler read the copy of the petition to Parliament which had been ordered; and it met with general approbation, as to the matter of it; and was remitted back to the Committee, to be put into the form appointed by the House of Commons, and thereafter transmitted to the different Societies for approbation.

Mr. Wilfon then brought forward the plan of Organization, for the different bodies of the Friends of the People; after reading over the whole of it, the Convention recognised the right of individual Societies, to regulate their own internal order, and resolved, That these words be inserted, " with power to any ten towns, in which there is a Society of the Friends of the People, to call a General Convention*."

Mr. Morthland next brought forward the following motion, proposed by Mr. Ritchie of Edinburgh.

Moved, That the Secretary to this Convention, transmit to the Secretary of Burgeses associated, for the purpose of obtaining a Reform in the internal government of the Royal Boroughs of Scotland, a letter inclosing the Resolutions, containing the declaration of principles drawn up and published by this Convention, and recommending to the Burgeses, if the above declaration of principles meets their approbation, to co-operate with the Friends of the People, in the common cause of obtaining the great objects of reform expressed in these Resolutions.

In place of this motion, the following was submitted by Mr. Skirving, and seconded by Captain Johnston and others.

Moved, That if any members of the Association for Borough Reform, apply to the Friends of the People to be admitted, they will be received cordially. But the Convention can admit no Societies, but Societies of the Friends of the People.

After a long debate, the votes were taken, and

* The Plan of Organization to be revised and published by the Edinburgh Association.

the first motion was negatived, and the second adopted.

Upon the motion of Dr. Yule, an address to the citizens of Britain at large, was unanimously resolved, and a Committee appointed to draw up the same.

The following motion, submitted by Mr. Ellis, was likewise unanimously resolved :

That it be recommended to the people, to form associations in every county, composed of members from the different Societies in that county, in order to ascertain the state of population, the number of electors, the quantity of taxes paid, the partial taxes, and the local grievances of that county. That they publish the same, or transmit them to the Committee of Finance at Edinburgh.

Mr. Fowler then moved, "That the thanks of the Convention be returned to Convener Lindsay of Coltbridge, and the other friends of Liberty, who, in a liberal and manly manner, refuted the aspersions thrown on the conduct and intentions of the FRIENDS OF THE PEOPLE, in the late meeting of the Fourteen Incorporated Trades of Edinburgh;" the same was unanimously agreed to, and the Convention expressed their sense of the benefit which was done to the cause by the patriotic conduct of that meeting at large.

CAPTAIN JOHNSTON in the Chair.

Resumed the consideration of Mr. Allan's motion of yesterday; when sundry members thinking that it was expressed substantially in the second general resolution, (*page 8,*) now printed, Mr. Allan agreed to withdraw it.

It was then resolved, That the thanks of the Convention be given to the Secretary, Mr. Skir-

ving, for his unremitted application to the business of the Society ; and that a small Committee be appointed to assist him in extending, and publishing the proceedings of this Convention.

John Millar, Esq; Advocate, called the attention of the Convention, to certain Resolutions in the Edinburgh Herald of the day, of which the following is a Copy :

“ We whose names are hereunto subscribed, being unanimously and decidedly of opinion, That for the security and happiness of all classes of our fellow-countrymen, for the maintenance of our own rights and liberties, and for those of our posterity, it is, in the present moment, incumbent upon us, and all good subjects, to give to the Executive Government an effectual support in counteracting the efforts of sedition, and in suppressing, in their beginnings, all tumults or riots, on whatever pretence they may be excited ; do hereby publicly declare our determination to take all such steps for these purposes as are within the limits of our duty in the several stations in which the Constitution of our country has placed us, and to afford, by our individual exertions, that active assistance to the authority of the lawful Magistrate, and to the maintenance of the Established Government, which is at all times due from the subjects of this free and happy kingdom ; but which we feel to be more peculiarly necessary at a time when insidious attempts have been made to deceive and mislead the unwary.

“ With these sentiments, and to this intent, we are

“ RESOLVED, AND DO DECLARE,

“ That we will stand by the Constitution with our lives and fortunes.

“ That we will jointly and individually use our utmost endeavours to counteract all seditious attempts, and, in particular, all associations for the publication or dispersion of seditious and inflammatory writings, or tending to excite disorders and tumults within this part of the kingdom.

“ That we will, on every occasion, exert ourselves on the first appearance of tumult or disorder, to maintain the public peace, and to act in support of the Civil authority for suppressing all riots and tumults that may be excited.

“ And whereas, we are of opinion, that it would greatly conduce to the maintenance of peace and good order, that means should be used to give such just and proper information to our fellow-subjects as may tend to remove the false and delusive opinions that have been industriously circulated amongst them, and to impress on their minds a proper sense of the invaluable blessings secured to this nation by our happy Constitution : we have agreed diligently to promote the circulation of such writings as may contribute to this important end.”

Having read these Resolutions, he moved, that the Convention do approve of the same, and in testimony of such approbation, that the President and Secretary, with as many of the Delegates as still remain in town, shall subscribe the paper now lying in Goldsmith's Hall.

Mr. Morthland seconded the motion.

Some Delegates, particularly Mr. Christie of Laurencekirk, doubted the propriety of the motion. Notwithstanding of which it was resolved, That the Delegates, in parties of eight or ten at a time should go down and subscribe the same; adding to their names, Friend of the People, or Delegate, &c.

Upon the President and a few more withdrawing for that purpose, Mr. John Clark, Architect, was called to the Chair, when after some conversation, the the meeting was adjourned till six o'clock in the evening.

The Delegates having once more assembled conform to adjournment, Mr. Bisset from Dundee, was unanimously called to the Chair.

Mr. BISSET in the Chair,

The Convention resolved, That a great number of their Resolutions and Minutes be printed, and sent to all the Societies, and committed the same to the direction of the Committee of Finance at Edinburgh; and Mr. Muir moved, that the Secretary be enjoined to give sufficient notice to the Edinburgh Committee of Finance, that they were likewise appointed the Committee of Finance for the General Convention; and upon the Secretary's motion, the following instructions drawn up by Mr. Muir, were unanimously recommended to their observation.

To the Committee of Finances of the Edinburgh Convention.

“ The General Convention has instructed each particular Society, to form a Committee of Finance, for managing their own private and public contributions. The Convention has requested you to take the management of the expences which their fittings here may have incurred. In this department of their business, they consider you as their Committee. The particular Societies will transmit to you their respective proportions of the general expence. The first General Convention has left each particular Society to the freedom of their own will, in regard to the different assessments they may lay upon their members.”

“ You will keep a regular accompt of the public expenditure and outlay, which you will lay before each General Convention for their examination.”

“ As soon as you have collected the amount of the general expence, inform each particular Society by a circular letter, in order that the Societies may, without delay, transmit to you their respective proportions.”

A respectable Member informed the Convention, that a Society had been just now formed upon the principles of the Friends of the People, whose members in general, were gentlemen of landed property to a very considerable extent.

Mr. Morthland moved, that the thanks of the Convention be returned to Mr. Fowler, for his eminent services in the business of the Convention; and the same were given unanimously.

It was then moved by Mr. Drummond, to thank the country Delegates, for their ardent zeal in the cause, manifested by coming up so numerously at this inclement season, and for their disinterested conduct during the sitting; and this was done with heart felt satisfaction.

Mr. Bisset in the Chair, begged leave to move the return of thanks from the country Delegates, to those in the town and neighbourhood, for the care and attention to the cause which they had manifested, in assembling so opportunely and properly, a Convention of the Societies of the FRIENDS OF THE PEOPLE. And to this the country Delegates heartily consented.

The President then addressed the Delegates, exhorting them to persevere in the great and

good cause in which they had embarked, until their object should be completely attained.

The warm approbation, with which the Convention received this sentiment, sufficiently expressed their concurrence in it, and their firm determination to persevere.

Adjourned.

W. SKIRVING, *Secretary.*

